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GOSPEL ORDER
Revived,

Being an Answer to a Book lately set forth by the Reverend Mr. *Increase Mather*, President of *Harvard* College, &c.

ENTITULED,

The Order of the Gospel, &c.

Dedicated to the Churches of Christ in *New-England.*

By sundry Ministers of the Gospel in New-England.

Prov. 18. 17. *He that is first in his own Cause seemeth just, but his Neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*

Isa. 8. 20. *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.*

Printed in the Year 1700.

Mynt: W Bradford

ERRATA.

ADvert. l. ult. r. it *is* Printed.
Ep. Ded. side 3 l. 29. r. ground.
S. 4 l. 7 r. wills. l. 10. r. impose *one*.
l. 19. r. Anti-Synodalia.
S. 5 l. 3. r. voluminous.
S. 6 l. 6. r. banner.
S. 7 l. 5. r. sell. l. 22. r. inartificial.
S. 8 l. 13. r. publickly *Preached*.
Gosp. Ord. p. 9 l. 3. r. that *when*.
p. 9 l. 16. r. invention.
p. 10 l. 9. r. notions.
p. 15 l. 33. r. stumble.
p. 27 l. 14. r. altogether, l. 32 that *as*
p. 21 l. 11. r. of *their* ways.
p. 22 l. 14. r. Synodical.
l. 33. r. we leave the Author to be *chastized*.
p. 23 l. 10. r. without *this*.
p. 28 l. 27. r. Apostolical.
l. 28. r. *one* only excepted.
p. 29 l. 25. r. *their* persons.
p. 32 l. ult. r. *we'l* for once give *our*.
p. 34 l. 14. r. *his* book.
l. 16. r. *were* greater.
p. 37 l. antep. r. ferre.
p. 40 l. 10. r. *as* Exemplary.

The Epiſtle Dedicatory,
To the Churches of Chriſt in *N. England.*

IT can incur no juſt Cenſure that we addreſs our ſelves to the Churches of Chriſt here in the following Sheets, inaſmuch as they are but a Reply to a Book lately dedicated unto them. Nor does our zeal, (we hope) for Truth, the Honour of God, & the Safety, Peace & Flouriſhing of theſe Churches come ſhort of what our Reverend Author may be inſpired with in his performance We make the ſame glorious Pretence with him to maintain & defend the Order of the Goſpel, altho' we cannot allow what is ſuggeſted in the Title page, That every Principle ſo ſtrenuouſly contended for in that Treatiſe, is either profeſſed or practiſed by the Churches of Chriſt in *New-England.* One part, at leaſt, therefore of his Book the Reverend Author ought to have publiſhed in his own Name, and not have obtruded it on the Churches here, whoſe Practiſe never gave grounds to ſuſpect them leavened with ſo groſs thoughts, as particularly his Doctrine of the Ordination of Miniſters is.

We will not gueſs at the Authors ſecret aim, or whom in particular he raiſes his Batteries againſt We'd charitably hope he has no private Intereſt to bribe him in this Affair; and we hope for a like favourable and candid Conſtruction of this Reply. Indeed the Name prefix't to that faulty Treatiſe, may be preſumed, with a multitude of prejudiced People, to weigh down all the Reaſons and Arguments

Arguments which can possibly be brought for their Conviction. And we have no such advantage to boast of; yet are happy in this, that we are not over-awed by any Name, and the Truth we know is greater, and more venerable than all things.

Its well known how liberal some men are of the odious brand of *Apostates*, for every one who cannot digest the late published Orders: but, without arrogance, we assume, as more due, the Title of *Proficients*, and doubt not to make it out, that our dissent from many of them is so far from a going back from any Gospel Truth or Order, that it is rather a making progress, and advancing in the Evangelical Discipline.

It is a groundless Calumny which is suggested, *That a latitude beyond what our Author contends for, is but a betraying the liberties and priviledges which our Lord Jesus Christ has given to his Church, or the Brethren of the Church.* These we profess to prize and stand for, and would by no means lose. But wherein do they consist? not in the Brethrens challenging any part of the Ministerial Work! Not in imposing upon others any thing which Christ has not imposed! which is but a debarring Christians of the Priviledges they have a right to. But they consist (as we conceive) in such things as these, That our Consciences be not imposed on by Men or their Traditions, Christ being the alone Lord of the Conscience, 1 *Cor.* 7. 23. That Believers are through Christ, freed from the guilt and dominion of Sin, from the curse of the Law, and from the sting and terror of Death. That we have the liberties of Gods House and Ordinances, & therein communion with God. That we may have the benefit of the gifts of his Ministers for edification, and such like, according to the Apostles Doctrine, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22.

Nor

Nor is that Objection less frivolous, when if we appear less *Rigid* than others of the Reverend Authors severity, we are reflected on as casting dishonour on our Parents, & their pious design in the first settlement of this Land. No, we reverence our Ancestors, and the Memory of their divine Zeal and Constancy, and would derive it as a Truth sacred to our Posterity, that it was a religious Interest which carried them through all the amazing Difficulties & Discouragements in that Undertaking. But yet, the particular design or end has been some-what differently conveyed unto us.

Some have carried it as if the great end were the Conversion of the *Heathen*; and there have been great Complaints by some of late, how this has been neglected and contradicted, and another course taken up, whereby instead of bringing the *Heathen* into the Church of God, many whose Fathers and themselves were once of the visible Church, are now strangely left out, scarce any face of Religion remaining among them.

As for this, we bewail it, and look upon it as a Reproach to the Land, and would therefore countenance no such Principles or Practices as have any tendency to such Apostacy.

Again, some have made this the great Design, to be freed from the Impositions of Men in the Worship of God, wherewith they were sometimes burthened; and as they sought freedom for themselves, we cannot suppose they design'd to impose upon others. In this we are risen up to make good their grounds.

The Reverend Mr. *Willard* in his Sermon of the *sinfulness of Worshipping God with Mens Institutions*, p. 27. gives this as the errand of our fore-Fathers into this Wilderness,

derness, namely, to sequester themselves into a quiet corner of the World, where they might enjoy Christs unmixt Institutions, and leave them uncorrupted to Posterity; and the gain-saying or counter working this, is, as he intimates, to cast dishonour upon them, or call them fools.

This Charge falls heavy on those who are for imposing their will on others. We crave no more but to enjoy the Institutions of Christ unmix't. And it appears very strange that those who fled from an Act of Uniformity, should presently impose on themselves, on their Neighbours, and entail the Mischief on their Posterity.

Some indeed would make the design of our first *Planters* to consist in some little Rites, Modes or Circumstances of Church Discipline, and those such as the Word of God no where requires. These are the men who dishonour their Country, and their Fathers Memory, by making their great design to lie in so small matters. And it is notorious there has been no agreement in these points from the beginning. Its known there was *Anti-Synodalia* printed, and who had a hand in it, *and how modest his Dissent was*, and in what terms they contradicted what the Synod had established, tho' the like is criminal and insufferable in any other.

These Principles in Church Discipline are also wrote against in English by the *Assembly of Divines*, by Mr. *Cawdry*, Mr. *Rutherford*, Mr. *Baily*, *&c.* In a word, if it be the Truth, according to Gods Word, we stand for, it would not be grievous to any of our pious Ancestors, were they now on Earth; neither will it be grievous to them now in Heaven: nor should it be grievous to any good Man to receive Conviction. We refer all therefore to the Word of God, *to the Law and to the Testimony.*

In

In the *Preface* or Epistle to said Book, we find several things that might be justly excepted against, but designing neither to be contentious nor voluminous, we shall speak but to one or two.

In *pag.* 8. the Reverend Author is pleased to number up seven or eight erronious Doctrines, as he apprehends them to be; & the consequence from all is this, that if we espouse these Principles, we give away the whole *Congregational Cause* at once. Whence we perceive now the professed cause which the Author engages in; tho' we hope it is not the Name or the Party, but the Truths they defend. We shall have occasion to examine these Principles hereafter; it may suffice here to say, they are *craftily & unfairly worded*, & in the Dress they are here clad, we do not espouse them; yet according to their most fair & genuine construction there is a great deal of Truth in most of them. And this is but a block the Author politickly casts in the way, which at last we fear may but discourage some from embracing the Congregational way, seeing it must needs fight for its life against some Truths. *It's hard kicking against the pricks, Acts* 9. 5.

Another thing Remarkable in the *Preface* is the Authors heat and warmth, pag 9. *Shall we then by Silence betray the Truth?* shall we retort, therefore we are bold to speak too. *Who is on the Lords side? Who?* shall we answer, we are, we trust (through Gods Grace) together with you, and all other siding we would have in contempt *Is there no one that will stand up for the Churches of Christ?* God forbid but we should, had others declined it! *The good People in them then may well think their Watch-men are all either dead or a sleep:* or if they talk light and heady, they may conclude them in a trance, or not quite awaked. *For*

which

which cause it is that I dedicate this ensuing Dissertation. And for the same cause we address you in the following answer. *It is not my cause, but yours.* Nor is it ours, but the Churches, and every good Christians in common. *Did I say yours? nay, it is Christ's cause.* We list under the same Banners, and would to God we were all as really, as we would seem to be, divested wholly of carnal self..... for truly our present Defence is become the peculiar concern of these Churches.

But why all this heat? we would not interpret too hard; but these Expressions seem plainly to carry this sense, *That every one who obeys not the late published Orders, is an opposer of Truth, not on the Lord's side, Enemies to the cause of Christ, and the Churches of* New-England. Whereupon the Reverend Author rouses himself, and sounds an Alarm to the Churches, *To put down all such.* If this be not involv'd in it, we would beg his Pardon, and be informed better. But truly, *Sir*, it is a mistaken Zeal, idly lavish'd away, and not kindled from above; for we know no such conspiracy against the Truths of our Lord Jesus Christ, or against the good of the Churches in *New-England*, altho' we are not proselyted to some of your particular Opinions. It appears to us, that the Reverend Authors infirmity in this matter, is the same with the Apostle *Johns*, Mark 9. 38. *Master, we saw one casting out Devils in thy Name, and he followeth not us; and we forbad him, because he followed not us.* Which too forward zeal our Lord checks, and reconciles the matter, *Vers.* 39, 40. *And Jesus answered, forbid him not; he that is not against us is on our part.* But in this case, as in many others we could instance in, if need were, the Reverend Author, tho' very zealous for a time, yet is not very steady & constant;

for

for before he ends his Book, he comes about again, in pag. 239. where he proposeth his Brothers Essay for Union wherein he shows how inconsiderable the Differences are between those of the *Presbyterian* and *Congregational judgment*, that they need not set Truth to purchase Peace. And yet by the cry just now, you would have though all the Truths of Christ trampeled under foot, the Cause of Religion deserted, and and a formidable War commenced by the *Presbyterians* against the order of the Gospel.

It is observable, that the Reverend Author in the Dissertation of the following Questions, makes use of abundance of Quotations from several famous Persons in their Generations; but in some the sence is perverted to a wrong end, beside the obvious intention of the Writers; in some he brings them in contradicting at one time what they said at another, and sets some in opposition to others. And where he endeavours to confirm his Tenets by the Testimony of some he might, if he had pleased, have brought many others to contradict the same thing. But this is a good way to amuse the Reader, and to cloud his mind, and to terrifie him, by mustering a legion of martifical Arguments. We shall be sparing in Quotations, and pass by many cited by the Author, tho' we approve them not. Only we crave leave to present one Quotation, which may be of use to us all along, being we are unwilling to be imposed on to believe what God never spoke, or to do what God never requir'd. It is that of the Reverend Mr. *Willard*, in his fore-quoted Sermon, *pag.* 23. 24. 'Hence it follows, that there is nothing to be received by 'us on this account, but what has Gods Seal affixed to it. 'Its therefore enough to set us down resolved against any 'such thing, if we can say there is a silence about it in the

'Scripture.

"Scripture, that God has no where commanded it in his "Word, either expresly, or by just and necessary conse-"quence, its no Order of his devising. Scripture silence "about any Tradition gives a full condemnation, what-"ever Pleas men may bring for it, as, *That it is profitable,* "*many have been edified by it, it is a prudent way to secure the* "*Interest of Religion; many wise, holy learned Men have* "*pleaded for it and practised it; that there is much of decency* "*in it and the thing it self is no ways harmful.* All this "is fully answered with that one word. *God has spoke no-*"*thing about it,* Heb. 7. 4. *It never entered into his heart to* "*enjoyn it.* Jer. 7. 31. Thus he.

This being publickly practised and printed so long a go by so eminent a Minister, and never since contradicted, we take it for granted, that none have any thing to say against it. And we are thankful to him for furnishing us with a Doctrine so fully laid down, to bear off the Institutions, Traditions and Impositions that men would lay upon us.

But it is high time now to consider the Questions which the Reverend Author propounds, and the Answer he gives to each of them. In which attempt we shall offer no other Apology for our brevity, save that our Author himself might have been as brief, and yet full as clear and convincive.

Essayed

Gospel Order Revived, &c.

THe two first Questions might have been wholy spared, yet may serve as a good Introduction to others of an ill aspect.

Quest. 1. *Whether particular Churches ought to consist of Saints and true Believers in Christ?*

It is granted that the matter of a particular Church (for the Question is not stated with reference to the Catholick) is visible Saints. And tho' the Answer is not given in the words, yet we would charitably hope his sense is the same, with the united Ministers in *London*. 'That none shall be admitted as members in or-'der to Communion, in all the special Ordinances of the Gospel, 'but such as are knowing and sound in the fundamental Doctrines 'of the *Christian Religion*, without scandal in their Lives, and to 'a judgment regulated by the word of God, are Persons of visible 'Godliness and honesty, credibly professing cordial subjection to *Jesus Christ*. Had our Reverend Author only said thus much, (and indeed more is needless) he had saved us the labour of any Reflections on this part of his Essay. But there is one passage 'in p. 15 which we cannot but except against. *A Scripture*, saith 'he, *which has respect to the times of the Gospel, severely rebukes 'those Ministers, which shall bring men that are uncircumcised in heart, (unregenerate persons) into the Sanctuary, into the Church of God, 'to eat the Bread and drink the Blood, which they that are there, partake 'of*, Ezek. 44. 7, 9. A hard saying, and who can bear it. The Text is here mangled, and the principal things left out. What God has joyned, our Reverend Author has seperated, to drive on his design. The Text saith Uncircumcised in heart, *and uncircumcised in flesh*: but here we have it only uncircumcised in heart, interpreted unregenerate persons. What a rebuke is this to the best of Ministers because (forsooth) they are not heart searchers, and dare not invade the prerogative of God. Did the Reverend Author or the Church with him, never admit any unregenerate

berate Person to communion with them? He will not dare to pretend to it, and therefore the *rebuke* is to himself. We know our Lord Jesus Christ admitted *Judas* uncircumcised in heart, an unregenerate Person to holy things; and in the purest Ages of the Church there were Hypocrites crept in, many of whom turned Apostates. Nay, our Author is so sensible of this, that p. 19. he quotes the opinion of the Reverend *Mr. Cotton*, *That its better to admit diverse Hypocrites than to keep out one sincere Child of God.* It is obvious then that Hypocrites may be admitted, and yet the Minister incur neither the *rebukes* of Conscience, or of this Scripture: nay, he may be approved of God, as doing his Duty, though Hypocrisie may too well consist with sufficient Knowledge, sound belief, a blameless Life, a credible Profession, &c. *To conclude*, Its very observeable, the Reverend Author closes this first Enquiry, by saying, *That the Churches here are free to admit those into their communion, who are thus qualified.* We marvel then his Zeal is not stirred to *rebuke* them afresh.

But what will the Reader think if we should make an Apology after all for the Reverend Author, and assure him he means no more, than that Ministers ought not to admit known Infidels or Prophane; for, for his part, he pretends not to know mens hearts. We only can intreat the Reader not to *rebuke* the Author too severely for his inconsistency, for he may mean well, and all parties are agreed. Unless he should imagine himself attacqued by the Reverend Author of the Doctrine of instituted Churches.

Q. 2. *Whether there ought not to be a Tryal of Persons concerning their qualifications and fitness for Church communion, before they are admitted thereunto?*

We shall not here examine the force of the Authors arguments, whether they unresistably conclude, or not; and whether the consequence is good from the tryal of the Apostles, the Porters at the Temple, or the 12 Angels at the Gates of the Mystical *Jerusalem*, to the tryal of Church Members. It suffices that the Reverend Author has modestly stated this Truth, and cited us to a merciful Bar, the judgment seat of a rational Charity, where the Judge avoids severity, and the tryal is managed with abundant tenderness: the bruised

bruised Reed is not *broken*, nor the smoaking flax *quenched*: the tender Lambs find the kind Shepherds Arms to fold them, and a gentle carriage in his bosom. This is indeed the part of the good shepherd, and we could now gladly commit our selves to the Reverend authors Pastoral care. So many good words remove all jealousie of a rigid Tryal. But alas! the Clouds return upon us, and a black doubt is started, as follows.

Q. 3 *Whether are not the Brethren, and not the Elders of the Church only, to judge concerning the qualifications and fitness of those who are admitted into their Communion?*

The Reverend Author allows there may be a difference of apprehension, as to this point, and yet no breach of Union. We think so too, and therefore as we continue to honour the Person, though we oppose his opinion; so we hope the negative will not deserve the popular cry, *Oh Apostacy! Apostacy!* The difference, as the Reverend Author tells us, is between the Brethren of the *Presbytersan* and the *Congregational way*, the former giving this power only to the Eldership, the latter joyning the fraternity with them. He takes up for the latter; but whether he proves it, the world may see when we have considered his Arguments.

In the fore-going Chapter, when he would prove there ought to be a tryal of Persons, he tells us of the *Porters that were set at the gates of the Temple*, 2 *Chron.* 23. 19 but those Porters were Officers 1 *Chron.* 6. 1. so he Instances in the Twelve Angels at the Gates of the Mystic *Jerusalem*, which tho' it may imply that the Gates were kept, yet not that the fraternity were the keepers. He instances also in *Phillip* and *John the Baptist*, which if it argues any thing, is applicable only to the Officers, and not to the Brother-hood.

But to examine his strength in this Chapter what he calls argument, may more truly be stiled dogmatical assuming, or a more mean begging the Question. Till pag. 24, 25. he quotes a Scripture or two in proof of his assertions, *scil.* 1 *Corinth.* 5. 12. 2 *Cor.* 2. 6. in both which places the Apostle is writing to the Church of *Corinth*, about excommunicating the Incestuous Person to his sin, and the restoring him again upon his Repentance. And we admire the Reverend Author to the same holy Apostle for an Answer. It is that known place, 1 *Corinth.* 1. *chap.* where he compares the

Church to a mans Body, and ſhows the diſtinct offices and operations of the reſpective Members, as the Eye and Ear, the Hand and Foot. And to render the alluſion the more intelligible, he names the Officers God had ſet over his Church, as more immediately referred to *v.* 28. God has ſet ſome in his Church, firſt, *Apoſtles*, ſecondarily, *Prophets*, thirdly, *Teachers*—— and in the cloſe of the 14. chap. he adds, *Let all things be done decently and in order.* The reſult of all is this.

The Apoſtle would have every one to keep his proper place and ſphere, and do his own work, *ſcil.* in the Cenſure of the faulty Perſon, the Elderſhip were to do theirs, the Brotherhood not to uſurp or arrogate any thing above their Province. For as the Apoſtle queries, *v.* 19. *are all Apoſtles? are all Prophets? are all Teachers?* *i. e.* in a govern'd Body we cannot expect all ſhould be Governors, *vid. Pool's Annot.*

There is another Text alſo produced to prove the power of the Brethren, *ſcil. Mat.* 18. 17. and if he ſhall neglect to hear them, *tell it to the Church.* This Text has been often brought on this account, and ſometimes on other accounts and as often anſwered, yet here brought again, but it will not anſwer the end.

The Context ſuppoſes an Offender, and the wronged party proceeding againſt him; and here are three ſteps the diſſatisfied Perſon is directed to take, in order to heal the wound given, 1.) To tell the Offender his fault in private. 2.) To tell him before 2 or 3 witneſſes, and if the end be not obtained; 3.) To tell it to the Church. Suppoſe now a Perſon acting according to this Rule (as we could give inſtances if need were) when the firſt ſtep did not gain his Brother, nor the ſecond anſwer the end, at laſt the diſſatisfied Perſon carried the caſe to the *Paſtor*, and now he reckoned he had told it to the Church. The Paſtor ſending for the Offendor preſently convinced him, brought him to Repentance, and to give ſatisfaction, and the thing was iſſued. Here the Rule was attended, the Church told, the offendor healed, the wronged Perſon ſatisfied, and the matter iſſued, when the Brotherhood all this while knew nothing of it. It is evident from the next verſe, that by the Church muſt be meant thoſe who had Power to bind and looſe, which Power Chriſt had given to the Apoſtles. Moreover let the ſenſe be that the Offence is to be told to the Rulers firſt, and then by them to the

multitude

multitude; not for the multitude *to judge of it*, but for their warning and example, for their prayers for the offendor, and their approbation of the Elders Censure, and that they might take care to avoid the familiarity of such an infectious sinner, *vid. Pools Annot.*

But if Scripture will not prove the Power of the Brethren, possibly some venerable Maxim may do the feat. *Quod tangit omnes debet ab omnibus approbari.* But alas! this Maxim gives so much to the Sisters, as to the Brethren. Surely it is no divine Oracle, it neither came from Heaven, nor is it according to the manners of men upon Earth. If a master of a family take in a sojournor or a servant; all are concerned, but their vote is not asked. If a Captain list a Souldier, all the Company is concerned, but it is done by his Authority, without asking their leave. And pray carry this maxim to the Colledge, and see if the President and Fellows will stand by it in their admissions. If it be objected, that even in all these cases if there be any sufficient reasons presented by those concerned, a prudent Ruler will yield to it; we easily grant it, and therefore its not unfit that men be proposed to the Congregation, if there be any thing to object against their lives, *&c.*

Another argument for the Brethrens Power in admission, is, lest the whole Power should sometimes reside in the hands of a single Minister; and that this is unreasonable we have a Speech quoted from the *Presbyterian Ministers in London.* But it is strangely perverted from their true meanning, as appears not only from the whole series and scope of the Book, but also from what is expressed in the page quoted (p. 51.) where they say, 'That the Power cannot be placed in the 'whole Church collectively taken.' The Scripture makes an exact distinction between Rulers and ruled. They only plead that there should be more Rulers in a Church then one; or that, when there are more, then the Power belongs to the whole meaning, the ruling Elders as well as the Teaching. And what is that to the Power of the Brethren? One officer has Power in plain cases to act in the Kings name.

Indeed our Saviour did frequently send forth his Disciples two and two. But yet *Philip* was sent alone to baptize the *Ethiopian* Eunuch. It will not excuse a Minister in the neglect of Christs work, because he has no fellow labourers with him.

But

But the ſtrongeſt argument comes laſt. *The way to keep Popery out of the World, ſaith our Author, is for the fraternity to aſſert and maintain that Power, which does of right belong to them.* In anſwer to which, we need only blot out the word *fraternity*, and in its room write the word *Elderſhip*. An excellent argument that will equally prove either way; and by the change of a word ſerve, alſo to anſwer Doctor *Owens* long Speech, which ends that Chapter.

In ſhort, all Power is ſtrictly in Chriſts hands, and our Reverend Author produces no commiſſion or order from Chriſt, for the Brethren to manage the affairs of his Houſe in his name; for he has appointed Officers of his own to that end.

Q. 4. *Whether is it neceſſary that Perſons at their admiſſion into the Church ſhould make a publick relation of the time and manner of their Converſion?*

The Reverend Author anſwers in the Negative, and adds, that the Churches of *N. E.* do not impoſe it, nor ought it to be required or deſired. He gives four ſubſtantial reaſons why it ought not And had he ſtopt here, he had done well, or had he added more reaſons to thoſe four, as he could have done, it had been an acceptable performance.

But about he wheels again, and ſeems to plead hard for it, or ſomething like it, which he calls the Practice of the Churches of *New England.*

This he would recommend from a ſtory receiv'd from the Reverend Mr. *Eliot*, but we have heard another ſtory from the ſame Reverend Perſon, how when one of the Brethren was highly commending his neighbours Relation, and preferring it to others, the ſaid Mr. *Eliot* turned upon him, and ſaid, *Ah Brother! don't be ſo much taken with fine words, but look to the mans converſation.* The Author relates another ſtory from the Reverend Mr. *How*, of one who through importunity was brought to make a relation, and made the Congregation weep, when he did it; but whether for joy or grief, we are left in the dark.

The Author gives us his arguments, but they do not reach his end. He pleads for them in that they are edifying; but we have known ſome that have been no ways ſo; or granting they were always ſo, can that juſtifie the inſtituting and impoſing them? would it not be

edifying

edifying if every Sabbath day evening, some well disposed (talkative) Brethren should stand up and relate the experiences of the week past? yet shall we make it a law or custom? will not some people assure you, they have been wonderfully edified by a womans preaching in Publick? and yet will our Reverend Author be induced to prostitute his Pulpit to them, or part with a Sallary to cherish their zeal.

Again, the Relation of Experiences is pleaded for, in that God may be Honoured by them. But we have known some to Gods dishonour, being insipid, senseless things, to use our Authors own words, meer formalities, too scandalous and superstitious. He saith, they are a means to gain love with the Children of God. But we have known some that have lost love and credit by them.

But the Question is, Whether they are an instituted means for any of these ends? Whether appointed by God, to promote his glory, edifie the Congregation, or gain love? If not, they are but the Institutions of men, and therefore to be rejected, as the before quoted Mr. *Willard* instructs us.

God has appointed the preaching the Gospel, the Sacraments, *&c.* for edification, and the promoting Christian love among his people; but we read nothing of these imposed relations, neither when Christ himself, nor when his Apostles after him, administred this holy Sacrament. Nor is there any appearance of such a Custom in the primitive Church.

Indeed, there are some occasions, as our Author observes, on which a Person who has had a remarkable Conversion, may declare it; but there's neither precept nor rule in the Word of God, that it should be done at this set time, and in publick. And with what face can we impose it, when our Fathers fled from the impositions of men? whether arbitrary Impositions are insufferable in themselves, or not; yet certainly they are bold and insolent in *New-England*, where the greatest out-cry is made against them in others.

But it would make a man smile, were he never so serious or displeased, to read the Texts that are brought for this Custom; as that *Psal.* 40 10. *I have not concealed thy Truth from the great Congregation.* And indeed the Royal Prophet had been inexcusable if he had, as a Minister would now, that should not declare to his flock the whole

whole counsel of God.

Again, *Psal.* 66. 16. he says, *Come and hear all you that fear God, and I will declare what he has done for my soul.* We imagine the Reverend Author supposes the *Psalmist* thus calling aloud in some vast religious Concourse, and that in order to his partaking of the privileges of the *Jewish Church.* But should we grant a supposal so ridiculous and extravagant, yet this makes nothing for imposing Relations, for then it should have been spoken and challenged by the People. Do you come, and stand forth, *Sir*, and tell us what God has done for your soul, and then we admit you to all the privileges of the Temple. Another Text strangely perverted to scare some good people is, that, *Mat.* 10. 33. *Whosoever denyeth me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in Heaven.* As if there were no confessing Christ, without making formal speeches in the Church.

And as if a credible profession of our faith in Christ, the taking his Name upon us in Baptism, and the renewal of our Baptismal Vow, and a devout attendance on the Ordinances of the Gospel, were not the true confession our Lord expects! Wo be to the world, if all were to be rated, denyers of Christ; who whether from inability, modesty or a just indignation, refuse to make a quaint *Speech* in the Church. The last Scripture we shall name, which has been equally abused with the rest, is that in 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. *That Christians should be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in them, to every one that asketh it*, to wit, in a proper place and time, for a fit end, and on sufficient Reasons, where there is Authority to command, or it is desired with modesty. The sense indeed is, that we should be ready to defend our Faith against the scoffs and cavils of Infidels and Persecutors: and that it is a shame to Christians not to be able to argue for their Religion, and confute gain-sayers. So that if you would infer hence any publick Speech in the Church, it must be rather an *Apology* for the Christian Religion, or a Sermon to prove its reasonableness and evidence; but neither is it in the least intimated that *this* should be made a stated term of Communion; and we are sure the Church has no more power to debar the refuser from any Christian privilege then to require Oaths, Subscriptions, and Conformity to a Thousand more Ceremonies.

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We have but one Remark more to make here, and that is, the Apoſtle requires this reaſon of our Hope to be given with meekneſs & fear. The true ſenſe whereof is, that which we are contending even with Infidels, yet we muſt not argue with an intemperate Paſſion or Zeal. Or if we conſtrue it, as in oppoſition to Pride and Preſumption of a mans own gifts and abilities; It is a ſevere Rebuke to many of our bold and forward Zealots, who have been famed for their promptneſs to ſpeak in the Church, and the firſt that have fallen under its deſerved laſh. We ſhould indeed be better reconciled to this cuſtom of Relations, were this preſcribed meekneſs and fear more viſible in them. But this is the miſery, the more meek and fearful are hereby kept out of Gods Houſe, while the more conceited and preſumptuous never boggle at this, or any thing elſe.

But it ſeems there is a groſs Corruption of this laudable practice which the Author does well to cenſure; and that is, when ſome, who have no good intention of their own, get others to deviſe a Relation for them. The Author may be ſatisfied there is ſomething of truth in ſuch reports; neither Charity nor Intereſt ſhould make us too incredulous. But then he paſſes a ſevere ſentence on ſuch Lyars to the holy Ghoſt. Which they truly deſerve, if in their relations they pretended to tell the time and manner of their Converſion, or if they ſo much as ſuggeſted it to be their own deviſing; but if it be only a profeſſion of their Faith & Repentance, it is not material who compoſes it, if they can conſcientiouſly ſubſcribe to it. And indeed a general form might be beſt of all in the caſe, if they muſt needs be made us. To ſum up all, we not only believe (with our Author) that ſuch as delude the Church, by bringing relations not of their own deviſing, do exceedingly provoke the Lord; but alſo that the impoſers of them as a term of Communion, do ſo too.

Qu. 5. *Hath the Church Covenant, as commonly practiſed in the Churches of* New-England, *any Scripture foundation?*

In reference to this Queſtion, the Reverend Author and others of his opinion, in their diſcourſes about it, love much to keep in the dark. We confeſs our ſelves at a loſs about thoſe words (*as commonly practiſed*) and *Solomon* has long ago told us, that he that anſwers a matter b fore he underſtands it, it is a folly and ſhame to him.

The Reverend Author knows we ſuppoſe, or if he don't, we do,

 that

that in some Churches of *N. E.* they have no Church Covenant at all, and that in other Churches it is differently proposed. Some understand by it only a Covenanting with God to perform by his Grace the Duties we owe to him, and our Christian Brethren, & accordingly do propose it; others mean by it a Covenant with a particular Church, whereby they are bound to walk in Communion therewith, till by their consent dismissed. Others will have it to be a necessary Qualification in order to a persons partaking of the Lords Supper, either there or else where; And others have Notions of it quite different from all these.

The Reverend Author first bears us down with a formidable Authority, telling us this Question was considered at a General Convention of the Ministers, *May*, 1698 and that all the Ministers then present save one, did concur in the Affirmative, but we have heard quite otherwise, and that it was then proposed and urged to have the Church Covenant more distinctly opened, though it was not hearkened to. It is a good policy to hurry on a vote their cause depends on, and like a first Principle, it must not be deliberated or debated; and such, as we hear, was the mannagement of that vote. And it is observeable the Reverend Author avoids (whether industriousty or no, we shall not guess) to state the nature of this Covenant, but confusedly saith, as it is practised by the Churches in *N. E.*

In the *Preface* we have the Authors own description of this Covenant, where he calls it *explicit Covenanting with God and his Church*, and sometimes with *God and his People*. But we renew our Complaint, that we are yet most miserably in the dark. It might be enquired here, whether it be two distinct Covenants, one with God and the other with his People? if so, which of them is the proper Church Covenant? If but one, whether it binds the person that enters into it, to perform the same Duties to God, and to the Church? and in case a person be dismissed, whether it is from his whole duty or from a part of it? and whether God and his Church Promise the same thing to the party covenanting? These Queries are offer'd only to provoke a clear state of the thing debated, which should be cleared to the understandings of people, before its imposed on their Consciences, as a term of Communion.

But before our Author ends this Chapter, he puts another disguise, and

and a more taking face on this matter. He would insinuate that the Church Covenant, as practised in *New-England*, is nothing more than the publick Profession of Faith, and promise of a holy Life; for which he quotes both Synods and several private Reverend mens Names. But this unfair dealing may be stript of its disguise, by shewing in what sense we allow a Church Covenant, and in what sence we allow it not.

1*st*. We own and plead for a Covenant with God, whereby a Person or People become his, and bind themselves to walk in all his ways. This was the Covenant that constituted *Israel* of old to be a Church and People of God, and which God made with *Abraham* and his Seed after him, by which he became, in a special manner, their God, and they his People. This is the Covenant that *Israel* renewed with God in the Wilderness, *Deut.* 26. 17, 18. To this God annexed his Seals, *Circumcision* in the days of old, and *Baptism* under the Gospel. It is by this Covenant that a Person or People are united to Christ the head, and do become Members of his Body. By this the Catholick Church is constituted, and we have an Interest in all those Priviledges that belong to Believers, as such. This is the Covenant we own, and which we renew every time we attend the publick Worship of *God*, *Psal.* 50. 5. and this Covenant ought to be explicit, openly professed and published to the World. It is a false and abusive insinuation (but frequently made in an awful Desk) that People are against all explicit Covenanting, or the open renewal of it; for there is no pretence for such a Calumny, that we can hear of: It must therefore arise either from idle Fears, or some mischievous Policy.

2*dly*. We also highly approve of a Covenant of Reformation. A great Duty in times of Apostacy, and gross corruption of Manners; to covenant to put away these and those reigning sins, to return to the Lord, and perform such particular Duties as have been visibly neglected. Of this we have frequent instances in Scripture, *Ezra* 10. 3. 5.

3*dly*. We may also allow a Covenant between Minister & People, whereby they bind themselves to those respective Duties, that the Word of God has made incumbent on them, on account of that Relation.

But we altogether deny a Church Covenant in the following sense,

and ſay, Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has no where appointed in his Word, that there ſhould be a Covenant entered into by ſome Perſons of a Chriſtian Society, excluſive of the reſt, whereby they being in Covenant one with another, ſhould thereby call themſelves a Church of Chriſt, making the Ordinances of Chriſt, or any of them to depend on this Covenant, ſo that thoſe who ſcruple it, or refuſe to joyn in it, ſhall on that account, not enjoy them. And that thoſe who are thus covenanted, or the major part of them, have power to make or unmake Officers, to admit or reject Church Members, to manage Diſcipline, to order the affairs of Chriſts Houſe in his Name, as if they had warrant and commiſſion from him ſo to do. Of ſuch a Church Covenant neither *Moſes*, nor Chriſt himſelf, the Prophets nor the Apoſtles have ſpoke any thing. None of the Scriptures, Arguments or Quotations of our Reverend Author prove any thing of it. We will take leave therefore to call it Mans Covenant, and not Gods, for it has not Gods Seal affixed to it; & though good, wiſe or learned men may endeavour to obtrude it, and plead, its harmleſs, edifying, or for the Intereſt of Religion, yet according to the afore-quoted Rule of the reverend Mr. *Willard*, we are to reject it, and ſhall do ſo, till it comes with a divine Stamp.

But poſſibly this may be called a *Miſrepreſentation*. You will ſay, Who owns it, or will plead for it in this Dreſs? *We Anſwer*, by querying, Whether there be not ſeveral that own and plead for the things contained in it? We wiſh there were a leſs Number. But to evince it, let us take it into the ſeveral parts. Are there none that plead for a ſeperate Covenant, which ſome (and generally the leſſer part) muſt enter into? and if it be good, and for good ends, why muſt ſo many be excluded? If it be to reform Manners, if to maintain the Miniſtry and Worſhip of God, if to lay ſtricter Bonds of Duty, if to bring men more effectually to ſubmit to Diſcipline, why then are not the whole brought in? for the whole Congregation are oblig'd to theſe Duties, and why muſt the Covenant be ſeperate?

Again, do not ſome plead, it is requiſit, in order to a Perſons partaking of the Lords Supper? But did our Lord Jeſus Chriſt require any ſuch thing when he firſt inſtituted that holy Sacrament? Did the Apoſtles when they adminiſtred it? Was it the term of Communion in the primitive Church? or where is the Scripture that commands it?

it? and why ſhould Gods holy Ordinances be annexed to Mens Covenant? Again, do not ſome plead, that thoſe who thus covenant, have the Power to make and unmake Officers? The Reverend Author will not ſcape here, whoſe Opinion in this matter we ſhall ſee hereafter. And, *finally*, do not ſome pretend, That theſe are the Perſons commiſſioned by Chriſt, for the admitting and rejecting of Church Members? This the Reverend Author defends with all his Might, under the third Queſtion, tho', as we ſhowed, he could find no Proof. And ſo much for the Church Covenant, which is a ſtranger to the Scripture, and has no foundation in the Word of God.

Q. 6. *Is publick Reading of the Scriptures, without explication or exhortation there-with, part of the Work incumbent on a Miniſter of the Goſpel?*

The Author does not mean, (as we ſuppoſe,) If there be no explication or exhortation throughout the whole time of exerciſe. If he doth, he fights with the air, for we know no Sect of Men but have ſome explication, tho' many among us neglect reading. We therefore take his ſenſe to be this, If no explication follow immediately without the interpoſition of Prayer, or any other part of divine Worſhip. For we conceive that the ordinary preaching the Word may very properly be call'd *expoſition, explication & exhortation*, and that in every Sermon there is a competent portion of Scripture for one time explicated and applyed. Nor can we imagine, the Reverend Author means that every clauſe a Miniſter reads in publick ſhould be in a formal manner explicated: Methinks it ſhould ſatisfie, if after one or more Chapters read, ſome ſelect clauſe, verſe o paragraph be inſiſted on and expounded, *i. e.* choſen as a Text, and preached on.

We are obliged to the Author, if but for quoting the Text in *Timothy*, where it is given him in charge, as his Miniſterial Work, *To give attendance to Reading, as well as to Doctrine & Exhortation*. That *the Jews were wont to read the Scriptures in their Synagogue*, ſaith the Reverend Author, *we all know; and that it was their Duty to read the Scripture at ſome ſet and ſolemn Times, we alſo know; for ſo it was appointed*, Deut. 31. 11. Again, he grants that in *Juſtin Martyrs* time *the Scriptures were read, and thereupon followed a Sermon.*

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We should have been thankful if he had added more Proofs, by way of Encouragement (as he could easily have done) and thereby confirmed some that are apt to stagger. He could have told how the Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*, do order and advise to it: He could have quoted the many famous Churches that do practise it at this day: He could have named several famous Ministers in *England*, and some in *New-England*, that plead for it, and practise it. He could have told of more than the Bishop of *Derry* that complain of the neglect of it, and that (to use the words of a most eminent Divine not far from us) *as the most just Reproach that the Churches of* New-England *labour under*. He could have told, for encouragement, that it is a clause in our publick Confession of Faith in *New-England*, *chap.* 22. which treats of Religious Worship, and the Sabbath day, *Sect.* 5. *The reading the Scriptures, Preaching and hearing the Word of God, singing of Psalms, as also the Administration of Baptism and the Lords Supper, are all parts of the Religious Worship of God, to be performed in Obedience to God with Understanding, Faith, Reverence and godly fear. Finally*, He could have told us (had he searched all our *New-England* Antiquities on this head) how in the Preface to our Version of the *Psalms*, the reading of *David's Psalms as other Scriptures*) in Churches, is taught to be one end of them, as well as singing of them, which is another end. It is ridiculous to say, that reading, with exposition is here meant; for then why was it not so said?

However, it looks very oddly, that they who neither read nor expound, should talk so much, and quote so many Names, as our Author has done, for a Practice which they never intended to come up unto.

We have heard what our Author has said, and much more that he could have said to encourage this good Practice: His Discouragements follow.

And *first*, he brands it with a hard uncouth Name, and twice tells us, that some call it *Dumb Reading*. We wish he had named those that so term it. There is so much Venom in the Epithite, and so complicated a Malignity in the Phrase, that we fear its infections, and may propagate a Spirit of Pride, & contempt of his Neighbours, and irreverence to his Maker. The Author well thought, so odious a Mark on the Front, would give all honest People a disgust to so villanous

villanous and ſtigmatiz'd a Practice. But his Policy has failed him, for it raiſes a juſt Indignation in all ſenſible and ingenuous Chriſtians. We will for once inform the Reverend Author, that the Scriptures are read in Churches audibly and intelligibly. Nor can we gueſs what Dumb reading ſhould mean, unleſs when men ſleep over their Books; and in charity to the Author, we wiſh he had been a ſleep when this unlucky word dropt from his Pen.

We are further beholden to the Author for his judgment, that the reading of one Chapter, with a brief explication, will edifie the Congregation more than the bare reading of twenty Chapters. But this is only his ſingle Opinion, and as it will not weigh againſt the daily experience of thouſands of People, who muſt judge for themſelves; ſo neither does it ſavour of modeſty, to think any one of his Sermons or ſhort Comments, can edifie more than the reading of twenty Chapters. We would not charge on the Reverend Author all the hard conſequences of his own words, or we ſhould ſay, that it is audacious ſo vilely to diſparage the Inſpirations of God. Alas! *Sir*, the Scripture wants nothing of ours to make it Perfect. We have the Confeſſions of many who have come to hear the Word read with prejudice, that God gives it authority from the lips of the Miniſter. And we know, that as all Scripture is given by *Inſpiration of God*, ſo it is in it ſelf profitable (without any help or advantage from us) *for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs—to perfect the Man of God*, the Miniſter as well as his People; and if it were not ſo in it ſelf, it could not be ſo by being explained. Here let our *Confeſſion of Faith* ſpeak for us, chap. 1. Sect. 7. *All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themſelves, nor alike clear unto all; yet thoſe things which are neceſſary to be known, believed and obſerved for* Salvation, *are* ſo clearly *propounded & opened in ſome place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due uſe of the ordinary means, may attain unto a ſufficient underſtanding of them.*

There is one Argument in pag. 47, 48. brought by the Reverend Author againſt this Dumb Reading, but ſo pitious a ſtumble, ſo miſerable an inconſequence, that we are loath to name it.

To iſſue this Head, we are more and more confirmed, that the reading Gods Word in the great Congregation, is ſo far from being offenſive to God, that it is the greateſt Reverence and Honour we can do it, and the moſt ſuitable acknowledgment we can make to him,

him, who in mercy has given us his Word, and will judge the World by it at the great Day.

Qu. 7. *Is Baptiſm to be adminiſtred to all Children, whom any profeſſing Chriſtians ſhall engage to ſee educated in the Chriſtian Religion?*

The Reverend Author, according to his wonted Bounty, at firſt daſh concedes to us, that he will not oppoſe the adoptive right. We then declare our ſelves ſatisfied, and crave no more; for we do not conceive that any man can engage or undertake for the Education of a Child in the Chriſtian Religion, unleſs he has the Authority of a Parent devolved on him, for the government of the Child. Nor would any conſcientious Miniſter accept the engagement of one who has no power or ability to perform his Vows. So that this engagement neceſſarily implyes the care and authority of a Father, and conſequently there is an adoptive Right to Baptiſm.

But the Author ſtumbles at the phraſe, *profeſſed Chriſtians*, and ſeems to think that the Queſtion, if carried in the Affirmative, would conclude for *Papiſts*, *Socinians*, and the groſſeſt Hereticks, as alſo for the moſt notorious Profligates, and prophane Perſons; as if it ever entered into the heart of a *Proteſtant Divine* to accept the Engagement of ſome lewd Debauchee or profeſſed *Papiſt* to inſtitute his Child for the Devil or Popery. Our complaint here is the ſame that the Reverend Mr. *How* once made of his Adverſaries, *That he gravely falls a combating with his own Man of Straw, and ſo we are to be tortured in Effigie.* But to pacifie him, we would inform him what a charitable Man would underſtand by a *profeſſed Chriſtian*, *viz.* the ſame that our Catechiſm does, when it inſtructs us, That Baptiſm is not to be adminiſtred to any till *they profeſs their Faith in Chriſt*, and obedience to him. We leave our Author ther fore to fight it out with that Reverend Aſſembly, for truly his Argument is formidable againſt them, in as much as *Papiſts*, *Socinians*, *Heretick*, the *Prophane*, *&c.* do all profeſs their Faith in Chriſt, and Obedience to him. Such is the Power of Intereſt, Faction, Paſſion and perſonal Oppoſition, that it blinds a Man on a ſuddain to fight with thoſe Truths which he has learned and reverenced from his Infancy.

Qu. 8.

Qu. 8. *Is Baptiſm in a private Houſe, where there is no Church Aſſembly, allowable?*

The Queſtion ſeems to grant, there may be a Church Aſſembly in a private Houſe (as we read, *Rom.* 16. 5. *Phil.* 2.) ſo there may be a publick place, and no Aſſembly.

We agree with the Reverend Author, that Baptiſm is a part of the publick Miniſtry, nor may it be adminiſtred by one who is not called to the publick Miniſtry; neither ſhould it uſually and ordinarily be adminiſtred but in a full Congregation, and in the moſt publick manner, nor would we drop a word to diſcourage ſo pious a Practice.

Yet, let the Congregation be never ſo great, if the Adminiſtrator be not a publick Miniſter, commiſſioned by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, it may be called private Baptiſm, and altogether unallowable; and if the number of people be ſmall, and the place otherwiſe private, yet if the Adminiſtrator be a publick Officer and Miniſter of Chriſt, the Baptiſm may in a ſenſe be called Publick, and in ſome caſes (as that of dangerous ſickneſs) not only allowable but neceſſary, and a duty. When a Juſtice of the Peace acts in his Office, though but few are preſent, yet they are acts of publick Authority, as truly as thoſe done in higher Courts, and with greater ſolemnity. Altho among us, where Churches are orderly ſettled, there is little occaſion either for private preaching or Baptiſm, it being certain the more publick both are, the more God and his Ordinances are honoured, & the general profit of his people conſulted.

But yet (as was hinted before) there are ſome caſes of neceſſity, wherein its ones duty to ſeek a more private Baptiſm; the providence of God not permitting a more publick attendance, and no Miniſter ought to refuſe their deſire.

As for inſtance, in apparent danger of death, it would be cruelty to deny ſuch a requeſt, if privacy be the only Objection. We need not ſuggeſt, that all what we call private Baptiſm there may be a competent number of people preſent; the neighbourhood being called in, and notice given to ſome of the Brethren of the Church. We obſerve a good Medium herein between the two dangerous extreams. We avoid all unneceſſary & common Baptizing in private, for which our Brethren in *England* are ſo very faulty; and we

would correct our own defects here at home, in refusing to Baptize in private, be the extremity never so great, or life never so hazardous. Not that we are at all tinged with the error of St. *Austin*, namely, a perswasion of the absolute necessity of Baptism to Salvation: but we esteem it the most publick owning of God which the state of the person admits of, or the providence of God at present allows; and it is good to be found in the way of blessing, and we may expect that God will bless his own Institutions.

Bu. the lawfulness of private Baptism, in cases of necessity, abundantly appears from that One instance of the Goaler, *Acts* 16. 33. To which our Author answers, St. *Paul* was an extraordinary Officer. But by his leave, that is nothing to the purpose; for the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel succeed the Apostles in those things that are of an ordinary and standing nature in the Church, as Baptism is. Indeed, his other reason is good, that it was difficult, if not impossible to get a Congregation of Christians; and therefore necessity was put upon the Apostle to Baptize the Goaler and family in private; which plainly holds forth thus much, that in like cases of necessity, as in times of persecution, danger of Death *&c.* the same practice is allowable and a duty; wherein we have the promise of Christs gracious Presence with us, as well as when it is administred in a larger Congregation. *Mat.* 18. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.*

Q. 9 *Ought all that contribute towards the maintenance to have the priviledge, voting in the Election of a Pastor?*

The Reverand Author in the very first line of his answer to this question, thrusts in a most unkind insinuation, and not altogether free from Calumny, as if the affirmative could not be maintained, but the charge of *Simony* must be incurred.

We therefore once for all profess, that we abhor as much as he pretends to do, the thought that Money should purchase us Church priviledges; but this is so wide a Ramble that it is not worth while to say more to it.

All the Authors arguments under this head infer only that it is the Churches priviledge to chuse their own Minister. And under his 4th argument he tells us, that nothing is more evident, than that in the

first

firſt Ages of the Church, Paſtors were choſen by all and only their flocks. Which we verily believe, nor could he have expreſſed the truth in more apt words. For long ſince he has taught us, *That adult baptized Perſons are of the Church*, and undeniably proved it in his Treatiſe annexed to the firſt Principles of *New England*, under which denomination they claim the priviledge of voting in the election of a Miniſter.

Indeed there is one argument at firſt bluſh ſeems pretty plauſible, p. 68. *for them who have no right to the Lords Supper themſelves, to appoint who ſhall be the Diſpenſer of that Ordinance to others, is highly irrational.*

We Anſwer; The adminiſtration of the Lords Supper is but one part of a Miniſters work, and but a little part, compared with all the reſt. Let us turn the argument then, and ſay, For ſome few to appoint who ſhall be the Preacher to the whole Congregation, is as highly irrational.

Suppoſe we (what is frequent in this Country) thirty or forty Communicants, and it may be two hundred to be admitted in convenient time; is it not every whit as abſurd, that not one of theſe who are to be examined, prepared and admitted to this holy Ordinance, ſhall have liberty to chuſe the Perſon who ſhall do this Work for them; but the Perſon muſt be altogether choſe by others, whom he has not this Work to do for. A hopeful argument that will help both ſides!

The Reverend Author calls it *A priviledge purchaſed for the Communicants Only by the Blood of Chriſt*; but he gives no proof at all of any ſuch Appropriation, and leaves us yet in the firm belief, that the Priviledge is purchaſed for the whole Flock, who had need ſtand for their own.

We might here borrow of the Author the Maxim he gave us in another caſe, *Quod tangit omnes debet ab omnibus approbari*. It was exploded in the other caſe, but if he will give us leave to put in *Æqualiter* (*Quod tangit omnes æqualiter*, &c.) then it would ſuit the caſe, and afford him ſome conviction.

The Reverend Author alſo gives us another Maxim in pag. 87. with this Elogium, *That it has its foundation in Nature and Reaſon*, though we are ſure it makes ſtrongly againſt him here, namely, *That which Pertains to all is not valid, if ſome of all ſorts have not a conſent in it*; for

ſome places have no Communicants, and there all grant this Right and Priviledge belongs to the whole: if afterwards they come to have ſome Communicants, by what Rule or Reaſon do they take away that Priviledge which belonged to others before? In ſhort, let our Author find one Text that limits or confines it to the Communicants alone, and then deprive the Majority.

But ſince Scripture fails him, he has another Refuge, *viz.* the Authority of the Synod, and the Law of the Land. The laſt of theſe we think excepts *Boſton*, and of both we need only ſay, that as they were done by men, ſo they may be altered and undone by the ſame men, when they pleaſe.

It is alſo hinted, *That this may prove fatal to the Churches.* But there is no danger, Truth does no harm; and we rather think it may be retorted on the Author and his Practice. There was lately a grievous Complaint made by a principal Man of *Swanzy*, before ſome Miniſters and others, That the Law which gives the Power to the Communicants only to call a Miniſter, is like to ruin them and their Poſterity forever, by excluding them from an able and orthodox Miniſtry, and the Ordinances; for the *Baptiſts* taking advantage thereby, have ſet up a gifted Brother, and ſpoil the place of the publick Miniſtry.

Qu. 10. *Is it expedient that Churches ſhould enter into a Conſociation or Agreement that matters of more than ordinary Importance, ſuch as the gathering a new Church, the Ordination, Depoſition, or Tranſlation of a Paſtor, be done with common conſent?*

The Reverend Author anſwers, *That it is both expedient and neceſſary*; though he had anſwered as well, had he ſaid, *It is altogether needleſs.* But leſt we be miſ-underſtood in this matter, let the Reader carefully obſerve, We do not mean that the Communion, or Fellowſhip, or Prayers, or Aſſiſtance, or Duties that the Church or People of God owe to one another, are needleſs. But for particular Churches, that are parts, and reſult from the Catholick, and are united to the Head, and in Covenant with him, and bound to perform all Duties both to the Head & to all the Members reſpectively; for ſuch to talk of entering into an agreement on this account, ſeems very idle and needleſs. To illuſtrate the matter; If a Servant has bound

bound himself to a Master, he need not go to make new Covenants to carry it dutifully to the Mistress, lovingly to the Children, faithfully to the fellow Servants, this being all contained in the Masters Covenant. So, if a Person marry a Husband, she has no need to make a new Covenant with his Father, that he shall be her Father, or that his Brothers, Sisters or other Relations shall become hers, this being all implyed in the Marriage Covenant: The respective Duties must be performed, but there is no need of new agreements or covenants to be entered into Mr. *Burroughs*, as quoted by the Reverend Author, expresses this well. *They are bound in Conscience to give an account of the wayes to Churches about them, or to any other who shall require it; and this not in an Arbitrary way, but as a Duty they owe to God and Man.* The united Brethren in *London* speak yet more fully in the Chapter of *Communion of Churches*, §. 1. *We agree that particular Churches ought not to walk so distinct and seperate from each other, as not to have care and tenderness to one another. But their Pastors ought to have frequent Meetings together, that by mutual advice, support, encouragement and brotherly intercourse, they may strengthen the hearts and hands of each other in the ways of the Lord.* We may add here the whole Chapter of occasional Meetings of Ministers, and so dismiss this Question.

Qu. 11. *May the Brethren in Churches, and not the Pastors only, be sent unto, and have their Voice in Ecclesiastical Councils?*

It is to be observed, that by this means the Brethren in a Synod will surpass the Elders in Number, and by a Cabal may easily out vote them Wherefore we can never believe that our Lord Jesus Christ has left every private Brother an equal Vote with any of his Officers, in ruling or managing his Church. It will be granted that the advantage is of the Elders side, as to Learning, Prudence, Parts, Piety, Zeal and Devotion, at least, taking the whole Synod together; yet that men of mean Parts, no Education, nor under the awe of an Office that obliges to the care of Souls peculiarly, should be equalled to the former in all Decisions, tho' not Debates, whereof they are uncapable, is very unaccountable. Indeed, had our Lord in his Word positively required this, we might expect that his Spirit of

Council

Counsel would more abundantly reside on the weaker Vessels; but otherwise, to fill a Council from the Plough, and the Stall, is a tempting Christ, and betraying the Church. Neither are we ignorant what Tools they are in the hands of any one designing Man of a Reverend and August Name, let his Opinions be what they will; these are Biggots, and the Man is himself a Synod. We confess such a Man would be tempted to stand up for the Brethrens Authority, which is his own support, and the mean while the Church is like to be well govern'd.

But what is a further Outrage to the sacred Office, the Author will not let Ministers sit as Officers of Christ, or as Persons authorized by him; for thus he expresses himself, pag. 86. *Its not their Office, but the Churches Delegation, that gives to Power to the Members of Synods, the specificating Act in which Synod all Power, and so the right of a decisive Vote is founded, is the Churches Delegation.* And to prove this, he instanceth in the first Synod that ever sate, as he terms that *Acts* 15. a Copy and Samplar left to all succeeding Generations. But how Comical is this? as if that was so constituted, or its Members delegated by particular Churches. Or, how long had this inspired Synod sat before that case was brought before them? or were they summoned upon this single occasion? Truly the Author begs the whole, and proves nothing of it.

Indeed, the Reverend Author tells us in the same page, *That of these Delegates from the Churches, the Elders ought to be the principal, or principally concerned.* A mighty grace indeed! yet even this cannot be allowed, and he consistent with himself; for in the next page he tells us, *There are some Brethren in the Churches, whose Gifts and Abilities are beyond their Pastors, and some again are more Noble and Honourable.* Now if they are alike delegated, and those can act no more in the Name of Christ than the other, pray why should they be the principal? Why may not a Brother of equal Authority assume and arrogate the first place to himself, which if he chance to do, we leave the Author to be catechized by him, and to do Pennance patiently by his own Principles.

Qu. 12. *Doth the Essence of a Ministers Call consist in his being Ordained with the imposition of hands by other Ministers?*

Qu. 13.

Qu. 13. *May a Man be ordained a Pastor, except to a particular Church, and in the presence of that Church?*

We joyn these two together, partly because they are of near affinity, and partly because some things the Reverend Author asserts under one of them, may indifferently be referred to the other. Our chief Exceptions may be reduced to these five.

1*st*. That he asserts, The essence of a Ministers Call consists in a mutual election between him and his People, pag 91. If we understand the Author, he means, that a person cannot be a Minister without his mutual Election, and that with it he may, and is. He had just before noted, that some think the essence of the Ministry to lie in *Ordination*; others, in its being done by a *Bishop*; *Which last Norton cuts off* (saith he) *most of the Ministers in France, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, Scotland*, &c. But, to retort your words, *Sir*, we think that your assertion cuts off more both for Number and for Eminence. It cuts off the Prophets, the Apostles and Evangelists! It cuts off all the Bishops that are and have been. And though these in general, may signifie little with our Reverend Author, yet some of them he mentions as great and eminent Lights. He cuts off Thousands of *Presbyters*, famous Ministers, who apprehending the Essence of their Ministerial Call to lie in their being ordained and sent of God, do wholly waive this mutual Election, as a little thing.

The Scripture speaks very highly and honourably of the *Ministerial Calling*. They are called Ministers of God, of Christ, of the New Testament, of the Gospel: Ministers in the Lord, Ambassadors for Christ; Angels, Lights, Stewards of the Mysteries of God, *&c.* All which shews, that not only the Essence, but the Excellency of the Ministry consists in their Relation to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and to that seperate and sacred Work that the holy Ghost has called them unto, *Acts* 13 2. But what Scripture intimates to us, That their Essence or Eminency lies in their Relation to this or that particular People? The Prophets of old never pleaded their Election by Men, but that they were called, sent, ordained and commissioned by God.

The Authors chief Argument here is a Supposition of Shipwrack upon

upon ſome deſolate Iſland: and we eaſily grant, that one of the Company being elected, may become a Miniſter of God unto them, but it is more from the Providence and Call of God, than their Election. Its God muſt furniſh him with Miniſterial Gifts Its God muſt incline him to undertake it: Its God that ſtirs up the People to receive and entertain him as a Miniſter: God gives ſucceſs to his Miniſtry, *&c.* But beſides this, it is to be conſidered, that God does not tye himſelf to thoſe means which he has tyed us unto in ordinary caſes; according to that uſual ſaying, *Jus divinum poſitivum cedit juri divino Naturali.* The caſe is wholly extraordinary, and God that makes the Neceſſity will alſo diſpence with our unavoidable Complyance.

Were our Author in the right, the ſinful Will of Man, whereon the Election does depend, might fruſtrate the whole Miniſtry that Chriſt has inſtituted. But, alas! whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, our Lord will ſend his Miniſters; and whether Men will call them or no, they ſhall be forced to confeſs, *Verily, we had Prophets among us*, Ezek. 33. 33.

We wonder alſo, that they who inſiſt upon it, That it is Chriſts peculiar Prerogative to ſtate his own Worſhip, ſhould ſpoil him of another part of it, to make his own Officers. If the People may do one, why not the other? And it increaſes our Wonder, that the Reverend Author ſhould revive this Aſſertion at this time of day, Forty ſix years after it has been ſo learnedly and ſo fully refuted in *Jus Divinum Miniſterij Evangelici*, publiſhed by the Provincial Aſſembly of *London*, *chap.* 9. without taking Notice of their Anſwers and Arguments.

2*dly.* We ſhall paſs by ſeveral things in theſe Chapters, which in a ſevere Diſquiſition, we might juſtly except againſt. Our ſecond Charge is, *That he makes impoſition of hands a little unneceſſary Ceremony.* Though we can diſtinguiſh between Ordination and Impoſition of Hands, and approve what the afore-mentioned Aſſembly ſays, pag. 157. *We muſt diſtinguiſh between the Subſtance, Eſſence and formal Act of Ordination, and the Rite uſed therein. The Eſſential Act of Ordination is the conſtituting or appointing a man to be a Miniſter, or the ſending him with Power and Authority to preach the Goſpel; The Rite*

Rite is Impoſition of hands. Yet we can ſee no reaſon why this Rite, being of divine Inſtitution, 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. uſed by the Apoſtles, the primitive Church, and generally ſince the Reformation, ſhould now be run down as ſo triffling a Ceremony. We know the Reverend Author could have quoted a whole Leaf of famous Authors, who ſpeak highly for it. If the Provincial Aſſembly at *London* diſpleaſe him, the *New-England* Plat-form may ſatisfie him, *That Church Officers are not only to be choſen by the Church, but alſo ordained by Impoſition of hands, and Prayer*; or the Anſwer to the 32 Queſtions, that ſays expreſly, *Ordination is neceſſary by divine Inſtitution.* But, is the Author indeed diſquieted at the impoſition of hands, becauſe but a Ceremony? It is but looking back to pag 80. and we ſhall ſee he as much magnifies and contends for as meer a Rite, to be ſure, *ſcil.* the right hand of fellowſhip.

The Reverend Author not only ſpeaks meanly of the laying on of hands of the Presbytery, but he too much countenances the Impoſition of hands by Brethren, or Perſons out of Office. His Text of Scripture, *Numb.* 8, 9, 10. reſpecting the Children of *Iſrael* s putting their hands on the *Levites*, is ſo fully and punctually anſwered by the Provincial Aſſembly of *London*, pag. 188. that we remit the Reader thither, for we love not to tranſcribe. In the New Teſtament he owns there is no inſtance of Perſons out of Office impoſing hands. And notwithſtanding all his inſtances, the Apoſtles aſſertion ſtands good, *Heb.* 7. 7. and without all contradiction, the leſs is bleſſed of the greater.

The Authors next Eſſay is, to remove the weighty Objection, *That none can give what himſelf hath not.* And this he does by ſome Similitudes. To touch upon one, pag. 99. *A Woman* (ſaith he) *by giving her ſelf in Marriage, cauſeth the Man, to whom ſhe giveth her ſelf, to have the power of a Husband; but no man will be ſo abſurd as to ſay, that a Woman has formally the power of an Husband.*

A poor Return indeed, to ſo weighty an Objection! An unmarried Woman has power over her ſelf, to rule and govern her ſelf and her Actions, as fully as the Husband has, when ſhe is married: though a particular Church, without any Officer, has not power to feed, teach, govern themſelves, and adminiſter Ordinances. Here is a plain Diſparity! Moreover, it is groſs, abſurd to affirm, that

the Wife gives the Power to the Husband. Indeed, she gives her self, but it is the Institution and Command of God, that gives the Power; and could we suppose that to be laid aside, they would be equal. To be sure, if Women once get this Notion by the end, that they give the Power to their Husbands, we should soon have them indenting, limiting and reserving in part to themselves, by a Marriage Contract, as well their Power and Authority, as their Estates.

4*ly*. The Author asserts, That no man ought to be ordained a Pastor, except unto a particular Church, pag. 101. Which kind of Doctrine doth indeed startle us, because it manifests the Reverend Author to be very unstable in his Judgment. It is credibly reported, That at a general Convention of Ministers at *Boston*, *May* 26. 1698. (and there are enough yet living, who knew the truth of it, to whom we appeal) this Question was discussed, *Whether a Minister may be ordained, though he had, as yet, no particular Church, in order to the Administration of Baptism, and the gathering & settling a Church?* This, as we are told, had a more peculiar reference to Mr. *Clap*'s station at *Rhode-Island*, and it was voted and carried in the Affirmative; and what is yet stranger, was lead on and put to the Vote by the Author himself, he being the Moderator of the Assembly. Upon this conclusion Mr. *Williams* was ordained in the Colledge Hall, in order to his Voyage to *Barbadoes*. Now it is wonderful to us, how the contrary to that which was a truth two years ago, should obtain now. Possibly the Reverend Author's modesty won't suffer him to think the Ballance equal, or we would put the late Vote of *May*, 98, in the Scale against the Council of *Calcedon*, p. 105.

5*ly*, We crave the Readers patience, and will offer but one Remark upon these two Chapters. In pag. 102. its said, *Pastor and Flock are Relates, and therefore one cannot be without the other. It is contrary to the Rules of Reason (as Logicians know) that the Relate should be without its Correlate. To say, that a wandering* Levite, *who has no Flock, is a Pastor, is as good sence as to say, that he who has no Children is a Father, and the Man who has no Wife, is a Husband.*

This is worn thred-bare, and answered long ago by the Assembly

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at *London*, and others, and ſometimes by the Author himſelf. A Miniſter may be conſidered under a double Notion, as a Miniſter of Chriſt, or of this or that particular Church. In this latter ſence they are Relate & Correlate, and no otherwiſe. Hence, if he leaves them, he ceaſes to be their Miniſter, and they ceaſe to be his Flock; but ſtill he may be a Miniſter of Chriſt, and they a Church of Chriſt. And thus in that little Book that is entituled, *The judgment of ſeveral Divines of the Congregational way*, concerning a Paſtors Power occaſionally to exert Miniſterial acts in another Church, beſides that which is his particular Flock; the Reverend Author expreſſes himſelf after this manner, pag. 1. *The Miniſterial Power which a Paſtor has received from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is not ſo confined to his particular Flock, as that he ſhall ceaſe to be a Miniſter when he ſhall act in the Name of the Lord elſe-where.* And a little after, *I am, as to this particular, fully of the ſame judgment with the learned Dr.* J. Owen *in his judicious Treatiſe concerning a Goſpel Church*, Pag. 100, 101. where he has theſe words, *Although we have no concernment in the figment of an indelible Character accompanying ſacred Orders, yet we do not think the Paſtoral Office is ſuch a thing as a man muſt leave behind him every time he goes from home; for my own part, if I did not think my ſelf bound to preach as a Miniſter authorized, in all places, and on all occaſions when I am called thereunto, I think I ſhould never preach more in this World.* Thus Dr. *Owen*.

We ſee then, that our Reverend Author and the famous Dr. *Owen* plainly hold, that though there be a Relation to a particular flock, yet a Miniſter is ſo authorized by Jeſus Chriſt, that he is capable in his Name to perform Miniſterial Acts in other places, and upon all occaſions. And were not our Author ſincerely of this Opinion, we cannot but think he would highly condemn any Miniſter that ſhould be abſent from his Flock four years together, upon any ſervice whatſoever. Sure, if he be no way capable to act as a Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, he is all that while but as a ſtray Bird, idly wandering from its Neſt.

Yet at this time, our Author would bear the World in hand, that a Miniſter has no power to act as ſuch, but to his particular Flock; and therefore quotes the words of the Plat-form, chap. 9. ſect. 7. *He that is clearly looſed from his Office Relation to that Church whereof he was.*

a Minister, cannot be looked on as an Officer, nor perform any act of Office in any other Church, unless he be again called unto Office. But a more eminent Assembly of Divines at *London*, have quoted this very Paragraph, *pag* 145 and severely, but justly answered it as a great absurdity, and contrary to sound Doctrine.

The Answer to the other part of the Question, *Whether a Minister should be ordained only in the presence of that Church where he is to serve?* Will result from what has been already laid down.

The presence of Christ must be supposed, when ever a person is seperated to his Ministry; but seeing our Lord Commissions none immediately, such must be present as have Power to authorize, Commission and give the charge in his Name. When ever a Call is given, received and accepted, whether it be by Words, Message or letter, both Minister and People are conceived, as present face to face. But the Circumstances of Times, Places, Persons, Distance, *&c.* must determine this matter; which as they may fall out, may sometimes render it both prudent, regular and necessary, (& then its the Voice of Providence) for a Minister to be ordained in one Land, and to serve in another.

Q. 14. *Is the Practice of the Churches of* New-England *in granting Letters of Dismission or Recommendation from one Church to another, according to Scripture, and the Example of other Churches?*

The Reverend Author refers to many Scriptures to prove the Affirmative, but not one of them reaches the Question, or proves a dismission for this end, *scil* to take a person off from being a Member of one Church, to be made a Member of another. The Epistles or Letters he refers to, are all Apostolical or Ministerial; not the Letters of one Church to another, some only excepted, which is mentioned as writ by the Brethren; but *Apollo*, on whose behalf they wrote, was not a Member of their Church; nor do they write to those in *Achaia* to receive him as a Member, but rather as a Minister, or as a Christian of eminence and singular goodness.

Indeed there may be a good use of Letters of Recommendation, and especially among strangers. And where a Member removes from one Church to another, a mutual satisfaction may be laboured after.

But

But we cannot but think such Letters frivilous, when in the same Town, and at two streets distance, a Person known over all the Town for an exemplary Conversation, prefers another's Ministry. Civility will constrain such persons to acquaint their Ministers of their purposes, and the same Christian Civility obliges such a Minister to acquaint the other Pastor (if need be) to whose Ministry they repair, that they have carried themselves well in his Communion, and that he hopes they may prove blessings in all other.

But as for the Brethren, We need not go to them, to make a second Speech, now to ask leave to with-draw, and to render an account to every impertinent Talker who thinks the man Married to him, and that his bed is broke into, or that there's no just reason for a divorce.

Moreover, some people are forever dissatisfied; neither conveniencies of Habitation, liking the others Ministry, profiting under it, or dislike of some Customs and Practices which he would willingly be rid of the light of, can satisfy. And what must the grieved person do further in this case? Why, truly he has done his duty, and may hear and communicate, where God and his own sober Conscience directs him. No ought any Minister of Christ, to reject his claim to the Lords Table with him.

To say no more, our Reverend Author having in a former Treatise proved that persons baptized are thereby subjects of Discipline, We think they all ought to be accountable to the Society where they are; there persons being dismissed by the Providence of God, whether they have letters of dismission or not. Else by their principles, an ordained Minister in *London*, formerly of Communion with a Church in *Boston*, being called to Office in a particular Church, and having accepted the Pastoral Care thereof, must first send over a Pacquet to *New-England* for a Letter of dismission. And don't you think he would be well imployed?

Qu. 15 *Is not the asserting that a Pastor may administer the Sacrament to another Church besides his own particular Church, at the desire of that other Church, a declension from the first principles of* New-England, *and of the Congregational way?*

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The Reverend Author Anſwers, No, not at all. Had the Queſtion been, whether this be a declenſion from the Truth, we had fully joyned with him in the Anſwer. It being true Doctrine, that a Miniſter upon deſire, may as well Miniſter to another Church, as to his own: both being Churches of Chriſt, and he a Miniſter of Chriſt, there being but *one Faith, one Body, one Baptiſm.*

But had we been of the Authors Principles, which he pleads for in this Book, we muſt have anſwered, that it is a great Apoſtacy and Declenſion. And when the Reverend Author firſt put out this in the year 1693. ſome of the old men and women did expreſs themſelves after this Rate —*That it was not thus from the beginning, and that he had put a ſuch a Pin out of the good old way, as would in a little while bring the whole fabrick to the ground.* Nor was this complaint without reaſon, for if particular Churches are ſpecifically diſtinct, if Paſtor and Flock are Relate and Correlate, that give being to one another, as Husband and Wife; if the eſſence of a Miniſters Call lie in a mutual Election between the Church and him; then we can by no means allow the Authors aſſertion, *That a Paſtor may adminiſter, &c 'Tis in vain to plead, I were may be as well communion of Officers, as of Members*; for theſe Principles will not allow ſo much as a Member of one Church to communicate in another. Hence the acute Mr. *Hooker* (as the Author ſtiles him) could never get over that difficulty, but looks upon it as unwarrantable for private Members to communicate in another Church. Neither can Dr. *Owen* or Dr. *Goodwin* (whom he ſtiles pillars among the Congregational) though they twiſt and ſqueze and ſtrain hard, maintain this Truth on theſe Principles, nor ſatisfy a rational mind about it. Tho' they plead they are tranſient Members for that time, yet this no more excuſes it, than if an Adultreſs to hide her ſhame and folly, ſhould excuſe it by ſaying —*She made the Man her Husband for that turn and all.* For if we run it to the narrow, the Adminiſtrator muſt deliver the Sacrament as an Officer, or not, there is no *Medium:* If as an Officer, then he has Power from Chriſt, as ſuch, to adminiſter the Sacrament where he is occaſionally called. And then down go the Authors Principles at once, of the Churches being ſpecifically diſtinct, of the Eſſence of the Miniſterial Call lying in the mutual Election of Miniſter and People, of Paſtor and Flock being Relate and Correlate, ſo as to give being to each other:

other, as such; or else on the other hand, it must be said, That a Minister, when he administers to another Flock, acts not as an Officer, but as a private Man; and this lays all in common, and destroys the Ministerial Power at once. And to attempt to reconcile it with our *New-England* Platform, will be but (as Mr. *Hooker* has the expression) *to make the Plat-form to speak Daggers and Contradictions.* Neither can it be pretended, that the generality of the Ministers in *New-England* were of that mind in the beginning. In the Answer of the Elders of several Churches in *N. England*, unto the Nine Positions, it is said, *Position* 8. *If you mean by a Ministerial Act, such an act of Authority and Power in dispensing Gods Ordinances, as a Minister does perform to the Church whereunto he is called to be a Minister, then we deny that he can perform any Ministerial Act to any other Church but his own, because his Office extends no farther than his Call.* And now we appeal to the Reader, if the Reverend Author must not either Renounce these his darling Principles, or own himself guilty of that Declension from the first Principles of *New-England*, which in another he would call Apostacy.

And indeed, we know well enough, that a few years ago, no young man could have escaped that odious Brand, that durst have printed such a Principle. But all is well that we do our selves, and every other Congregational Tenet had been laudably rejected, had some men the doing of it. Let another presume, he is a *Backsliter*, an *Apostate*, *Proud*, *Rash*, *Contemptuous*, and *Despiser of his Fathers.* The same thing, (to allude to the Authors words, *pag.* 71.) in one man, is a *modest inoffensive Dissent* in another, a daring Contradiction to Synods.

Qu. 16. *Is it a Duty for Christians in their Prayers, to make use of the words of that which is commonly called the* Lords Prayer?

Though the Authors answer hereto be very large, yet we shall say very little to it, or against it. He yeilds and allows, it may be lawfully used, as well as other Prayers and Passages in Scripture, in our Addresses to Heaven: That it has been used in antient Times, he does not deny; and we know that it is most frequently used by the most famous Divines in these days. And he gives us an instance of

Mr

Mr. *Jer. Burroughs*, which we thank him for, having never heard it before. That it has been abused to Superstition, and the Tryal of Witch-craft, we also know; but the abuse of a thing does not take away the proper lawful Use of it; nor is it fit so far to gratifie those that made it a Charm, as for that reason to refrain to use it.

But verily the Author would have us more superstitious than we are willing to be; for he quarrels at the varying but of one word or clause in this excellent form of Prayer: If instead of *Debts* or *Sins* we say *Trespasses*, it is a fearful Crime. For why? says the Author, *It smells rank of the Liturgy, its learn'd out of the Common-Prayer Book.* He might have said rather, That we learn first so read it so in our Horn-Books, and are mis-taught from our Infancy. But truly, we account this difference of Translation a petty thing. And if instead of *Hallowed*, the Author would say *Sanctified*; and instead of *daily Bread*, he would chuse to say *convenient Food*, we should not fall foul on him.

No, says the Author, pag. 123. *why then you give up the Cause.* In truth, then the Author has no adversary in the world, where the Lords Prayer is used in any Language beside the *Greek*; for who binds himself to a Translation, as to an Original? but the Author's meaning is apparent, he would insinuate into the heedless Reader, That whoever useth the Lords Prayer, ought not to vary one word from the words Christ gave it in; and truly, then they must, like *Barbarians* to the People, tone it in the *Original Greek*.

We would offer here one Query more. Does the Author mean, in stating this Question, to enquire whether it be an indispensible Duty to use the words of the Lords Prayer in all our Addresses to God, so that as often as we bow our Knees in Prayer, we should think it necessary to repeat this Form? Here again he would have no Adversary under Heaven. Yet the Question may be strained to all this, and he has taken no care to bound it.

But to detain the Reader no longer, 'tis enough and enough that the Reverend Author justifies it as lawful; for then doubtless it may be sometimes proper: for that would be a strange thing indeed, that is always lawful, and never (in no Circumstances, not in that of Mr. *Burroughs* himself) can be proper. But since 'tis lawful, I'll for once give my sence when it is proper, *viz.* When People have been long

long taught and made to believe, that the Use of it is Superstitious, To place a great part of their Religion in the dislike of it; To think this a principal ground of Non-conformity, and a distinguishing Badge of a Dissenter; or, that it is too vain a Formality to comport with the Spirit of Devotion. Then, if ever, it is high time to correct such a Prejudice, and to show the People it may be used without Superstition, and that neither the Spirit of Religion, nor yet the Arguments for *Episcopacy*, *Presbyterianism* nor *Independency* are any ways concerned in this affair.

Here we would crave the Readers patience for one Quotation, and the rather inasmuch as the Name of Mr. *Philip Henry* may be of more Authority with the Reverend Author, than many arguments, when barely offered by us. It is said in the 97th page of Mr *Henry*'s Life, "That he looked upon the *Lords Prayer* to be not only a *Directory* or "*Pattern* for Prayer, but (according to the advice of the *Assembly of* "*Divines*) proper to be used as a *Form*. He thought it was an Error "on the one hand to lay so much stress upon it, as some do, who think "no solemn Prayer accepted, nor no solemn administration of Wor-"ship compleat without it; and he thought it an Error on the other "hand not to use it at all, since it is a Prayer, a comprehensive com-"prehensive Prayer, and may be of Use to us, at least, as other "*Scripture Prayers*; but he thought it a much greater Error to be "*angry at those who do use it*, to judge and censure them, and for no "other reason to conceive Prejudices against them and their Ministry. "A great strait (saith he) poor Ministers are in, when some will "not hear them, if they do not use the *Lords Prayer*, and others "will not hear them if they do! What is to be done in this case? "We must walk according to the light we have, and approve our "selves to God, either in using or not using it, and wait for the day "when God will mend the matter, which I hope he will do in his "own due time. — — Thus spake the holy and heavenly Mr *Henry*, and with him the late Reverend Dr. *Bates*, who writes the Dedication of his Life, and as he hath fully expressed our sense in this matter, so we would wait and pray with him, *for the Happy Day*.

Well, but if the case be so circumstanced, says the Author, pag. 135. *that it cannot be done without Offence, it is rather a Duty, and will be most pleasing to Christ, not to use it as a Form.* But then such Offence must

be manifested, and appear to be conscientious. This confirms what I before suggested, That there is a rivetted Prejudice people are educated in against this Practice, that they start at it as a thing in it self sinful and scandalous.

But to show we are in Charity with the Author, and all those who omit the Use of this excellent Form of Prayer, we shall close this Chapter in the words of St. *Paul*, Rom. 14. 3. *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth.*

Qu. 17. *May the Churches under the* Presbyterian *and* Congregational Discipline *maintain Communion with one another, notwithstanding their different Sentiments, as to Church Government?*

The Author answers, *That they may and ought to do so.* And truly, had this Book contained only this one Question and Answer, it might have turned to more Edification than the whole. He tells us, There was greater Differences than these in the *Apostolick Churches.* Me thinks then we of latter Days may the better bear with one another, the effusions of the Spirit of Peace and Truth being since much restrained.

The Reverend Author observes further, *That both Perswasions have been Confessors and fellow Sufferers, and he thinks this should endear them.* We think so too, but to our sorrow, some of us have heard how it hath been in *England*, & now, alas! we see it verified in our Author, that when their own Persecution ceases, they carry on the Tragedy on others. We do not wonder at what the Author saith Mr. *Baxter* told him, *That if all* Independants *were like* N. England Independants, *he would soon be one.* For we can easily guess what deceived that excellent Person (whose Moderation suited his Piety & Devotion) into so endearing an Expression. He form'd his Idea of *New-England Independency* by the Authors plausible carriage when in *London*, which though for that time might be very sincere, yet either the difference of the Climate, or that his Dominion here is more rightful, quite alters him. We are assured, the Author is esteemed more a *Presbyterian* than a *Congregational Man*, by scores of his Friends in *London*. He is lov'd and reverenced for a moderate Spirit, a peaceable Disposition,

poſition, and a Temper ſo widely different from his late Brothers in *London*. He was moſt converſant at the *Preſbyterian* Board, and ofteneſt in their Pulpits, and profeſſed the greateſt Reverence for their Perſons. And no wonder Mr. *Baxter* ſhould be ſo enamoured of ſuch *Independents!* Did our Reverend Author appear the ſame here, we ſhould be his eaſie Proſelites too. But we are loath to ſay how he forfeits that venerable Character, which might have conſecrated his Name to Poſterity, more than his Learning, or other honorary Titles can. To confirm what we have here ſaid, the Author declares how Inſtrumental he was to promote the Union betwixt the United brethren in *London*. We only wiſh he would be as cordial and active to keep it, as he was to make it; or elſe the World will think his Zeal for it was, becauſe far enough from home, where Intereſt was not touched.

As for the three *Articles of Union*, which the Author tranſcribes, we would endeavour to maintain them, and all the reſt. But there are ſome Caſes and Times, when Miniſters of ſome particular Opinions will not bear to be conſulted with. Or if there is a neceſſity of diſobeying their Opinions for once, it is beſt not to conſult them, meerly to do their Counſels the more Deſpight. We think this modeſt and ingenuous. Nor can it be reaſonably expected that a *Congregational Claſſis* (if ſuch there be) ſhould be conſulted in thoſe things which are properly *Preſbyterian*, their Prejudice, in favour of their own Opinions, rendering them unfit to advife with in that matter; and the more ſerious the application to ſuch is, the more ſeverely would they think themſelves bantered.

As to his Query, *Whether the embodying into a Church State be not a mighty matter?* We muſt needs profeſs, we want ſome better account what that is, before we can ſo eſteem it. We read nothing in Scripture of gathering a Church, or embodying it into a Church ſtate, unleſs it refers to the converting and baptizing of *Heathen*, and then adminiſtring the Ordinances of the Goſpel in a ſtated way to competent Numbers, whoſe convenience will permit them to meet conſtantly at one and the ſame place of Worſhip. All further Solemnity in this matter is *ex abundanti*, and therefore the matter ſeems not ſo very weighty.

WE now humbly take leave of the Author and his Book, wishing there had been no occasion for these Reflections, and accounting it a sufficient Apology, that we have been contending for what we apprehend to be the Truth; and it became the more necessary to vindicate it, lest it should suffer more by the Reverend Author's Name and Authority, than by his arguments. So far is the Presidency of the College from being a Protection, that it is the loudest argument in our Ears for a zealous Confutation.

Nor can the Reverend Author much resent this our search after Truth, if he remembers the liberty that the humble and holy *Mr. Baxter* once Pray'd him to take, in examining and refuting any Errors he should find in his Books, or should the Author grow angry, it would but cause us to suspect (what a bundance of people have long obstinately believed) that the contest for his part is more for Lordship and *Dominion* than for *Truth*.

'Tis possible some good people may blame us, for carrying on the Contention, wherein, as one saith, though there be but little Truth gain'd yet a great deal of Charity may be lost. We hope the best, as to both these; but however it happens, we are willing to promise the Reader, that scarce any thing shall provoke us further to concern our selves in these disputes: no, not so much as to make any Return, should a Thousand pretended Answers be published; for we love not to be contentious, but (as the Reverend Author is wont to say in like cases) *it suffices that we have born our Testimony.*

And here we must do justice also to those who have first openly asserted and practised those Truths among us. They deserve well of the Churches of Christ, and though at present decryed as Apostates and backsliders, the generations to come will bless them. So a score of years or more past, the Enlargement of Baptism was cryed out upon, as a wofol declension; but the present generation feels the happy effects of it, and rising up at the Reformers names, do call them blessed.

To concluds all, it is the Answerers sincere desire and design, if it be possible, and as far as in them is, to live peaceably with all men. 'Tis their prayer, that God would grant peace and Truth in our dayes, rebuke the evil Spirit of pride, uncharitableness, contention and

contempt

contempt of others, and pour forth on us all his Spirit of Grace and Love.

And now the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever. *Amen.*

Post'cr pt.

IT is strange that our *Review* should be *assaulted* before it can be Printed. Yet so it happens in a late Pamphlet, entituled, *A soft Answer to the Doctrine of instituted Churches.* Let them call it *soft* who have lost their feeling! For tho' 'tis confessed there are no very hard Arguments, yet Jealousie, Censures, Contempts there are, which grate hard enough.

In pag. 12. the Reverend Authors seem jealous of some *Injurious* Treatment in this our *Review*; whereas their *soft Treatise* is injurious not to us only, but to *whole Synods and Nations of Presbyterians.* They dare to say, that their *Gospel Order*, which is here answered, is *vindicated in every point, from the Confessions of the Reforming* Presbyterians *beyond Sea*; *and that not only from particular Authors of great fame among them, but Whole Synods, Whole Nations of them.* O Injury to Truth and Modesty! Tell us (*Sirs*) we beseech you, what Synods, what Nations of *Presbyterians* do oppose reading Gods Word in publick Worship, or the using the Lords Prayer, that excellent, perfect and most comprehensive Form? That limit the Right of chusing a Minister to a particular Church Covenant? That say, the Essence of the Ministerial Call consists not in the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery, or that the Brethren may lay on hands, or that there shou'd be no Ordination but to a particular Church. You reasonably add, *Optimus ille qui servire novit injurias plurimas* ——, Though the best men in the world will hardly bear all this. Could our Authors perswade us to believe, this we would obey him, and name our selves no more

more *Presbyterians.* We appeal (in our Authors words, pag. 16.) *To all the* Presbyterians *in the World, ſay, O ye Men of God, and of Order! What Reparation can our Authors make you for this Wrong, in making your Name the Umbrage* of theſe their Errors.

We are, moreover oblig'd to the Reverend Authors for their Civilities, pag. 7. *'Tis a gadding, unſtudyed, unſtable Generation,* full of *Levity, bleating and lowing* Animals, *Raw Youth,* pag. 15. They merit (forſooth!) this contempt for calling themſelves *Presbyterians,* but even let the Calf be known by its bleating. Too late that Rule came to mind, pag. 50. *Being reviled, we bleſs, being defamed, we entreat.*

In pag. 14. the Authors complain, That we pay not due Deference to the Claſſis of the Paſtors in the Vicinity, and yet they aſſume not any Power of a Claſſis, any further than to forbid us to be *Presbyterians.*

We highly approve of many particulars in pag. 17. That the Proponant for the Lords Table be examined of his Baptiſmal Vow, his ſenſe of ſpiritual Wants, Sinfulneſs and Wretchedneſs, his Hope, Faith, Experiences, Reſolutions through the Grace of God But then come two words, *Covenant* and *Brethren,* in Capital Letters, as a Lyon Rampant, inſulting a couching Claſſis, a bleeding Presbytery. But if we look over the Anſwer to the laſt Queſtion in *The young Adams claim to the Sacrament* (whereto theſe words in our Author do refer) we ſhall find, that the Proponant promiſes nothing more than to be ſubject to the cenſures adminiſtred unto him by *the Paſtor of the Church and its Officers.* So, Sirs, the *Brethren* are dropt, wittingly, no doubt, by the quick-ſighted Author. And indeed, for the Brethren to be named in the Queſtion, and neglected in the Anſwer, is a fair Negative on them. The Proponant promiſes no ſubjection to them, and the Reverend Authors ſagacity is wonderful in that Anſwer, for the Queſtion takes the Congregational Brother, the Anſwer ſatisfies a Presbyterian.

It ſeems alſo that the Adverſaries of this Goſpel Order multiply a pace; for in pag. 22. *They are meerly a few Gentlemen at* Boſton *and New-York.* But by that time you come to pag. 30. our Brethren of Connecticut *exceed all the reſt of* New-England *in proclaiming their Indiſpoſition*

Indisposition to it. And by the following Exclamation, *O Times and Manners!* it seems that *Cicero* must be called from the Grave to inveigh against these *Raw Youths*, these licentious *Catalines*.

We can't pass over pag. 61. without a Remark. *The Apostacy of our Young Men* (say our Authors,) *is great before the Lord.* The Apostacy (it seem.) respects the *Examination and Qualifications of Communicants at the Lords Table*, which is suggested to be *in decrying the Necessity of mens coming to the holy Table with Repentance, Faith and Love.* God forbid we should so accuse, or not vindicate our Brethren. This is to alledg a Crime abhorred by the Generation aperied. —— Well, but they *zealously disperse unhappy Pamphlets.* If the Doctrine of Instituted Churches be referred to, that is but one; and what other the Reverend Authors mean, we cannot guess; and that Treatise in most parts is a Mine of Gold, and a rich Treasury of right Thoughts.

The next Surmize is a meer Defamation, That *Gouge, Roberts, Dolittles* Books must be hiss'd back to *Europe* again. A pretty device to praise the Gentlemen beyond Sea, and at the same time condemn those here that conform to their constant Practice.

Had the Attestation in pag. 63. been only to recommend the following Treatise of the excellent Mr. *Quick*'s to our perusal and Practice, no Minister in *New England*, that calls himself a *Presbyterian*, but would chearfully subscribe it; but we believe few would confederate in its Reflections on the Reverend Mr. *Stoddard*, or favour that worse Report, That *under the Umbrage of the Name of* Presbyterians *some would bring in Innovations, ruinous to our Churches, and contrary to the Doctrine and Spirit of Mr.* Quick's *Book.*

And to add one Guess here, Its twenty to one if any one of the *Attestators* knew what a *soft Answer* was to be prefix'd to their *Attestation.* For this would not be the first time that men have subscribed a Paper, which had they known would have been placed to such advantage, as to the less discerning Reader to seem an Attestation to the whole Book, they would have refused their Names with Indignation.

What remains is to Recommend that Treatise, *The Young Man's Claim to the Sacrament*, to the serious and diligent perusal of our Youth.

A Performance, for its kind, very perfect, and highly profitable. But the Reverend Author and his Treatise are both abused in this Impression. Mr. *Quick* is here betrayed in a specious show of Reverence and Friendship; while his Name is used to Combate those very men and their Principles, which he most values and honours. And were Mr. *Quick* here among us, and should continue what is his stated Practice in the Worship of God, he would be decryed among the *Presbyterian Formalists*, in pag 9. as much as he is now magnified for a Reformer. For our parts, we do sincerely believe him to be our *Exemplary Reformer*, and wish our Reverend Authors would credit their Character of him, and follow his Example; for he is conscientious to have the Scriptures read every Sabbath in the publick Worship of God, together with the Ten Commandments, and he as often uses the Lords Prayer. Nay, a few years since this Reverend and holy Person took leave of a reverend Minister, returning to us, in words to this effect, *Sir, tell our Reverend Brethren in* New-England *that they must come over to the* Presbyterian *Government, if they would preserve their Churches.*

And would it not now provoke a just Indignation to see People so deluded, and a Gentlemans Name (so dear and venerable as it is with us) advanced against his own Principles? And will it not turn unto us for a Testimony (to use the Authors words, pag 50.) not only that we have endeavoured to vindicate the Truth, but also to do Mr. *Quick* justice?

FINIS.